

Milford Lake Spotlight
Thursday, March 1, 2007

Good morning, I'm Cynthia Dierks, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger with the Milford Lake Update.

For all of you who have become lake elevation watchers this winter, we finally have some really good news! The lake is coming up and at the time this Lake Update was written, we were only 4 feet and 67 hundredths of a foot below normal! To make the situation even better....there's rain in the long range forecast. Currently the river flow at Clay Center is good due to snow melt and rain in the upper portions of our watershed. You may not realize that our watershed goes up into south central and southwestern Nebraska and a portion of the northeast and central eastern part of Colorado. We have 24,880 square miles in our watershed!

There's one question I always get a kick out of during this time of year. It always goes something like this...."What do you guys do during the winter?" Maybe it's the accompanying look that makes me smile, as they seem to expect an answer like..."Go on vacation for 3 months"...or "Hibernate at my desk through the winter." I always enjoy how surprised they seem to be when the answer is "Work to get ready for the next recreation season." And that's exactly what we have been doing. Now that the ice is off the lake, I guess you could say the "next recreation season" is upon us!

If you are chomping at the bit to launch your boat, please be careful. Although the lake level is up, there may be hidden holes at the end of the concrete ramp due to erosion or prop wash, large rocks or even concrete out of alignment which could cause you some problems while launching. Speaking of launching boats at the lake, we suffered some ice and wind damage to the courtesy boat dock at Farnum Creek Park. We also have two new slide-in docks to put in at Farnum Creek and West Rolling Hills Parks. You may have seen them sitting on the parking lots as we finish putting them together. They will be easier to adjust as lake elevations change and more convenient for the single boat launcher.

Our Staff has also been busy cleaning up dead and diseased trees in School Creek Park, making repairs to the vehicular damage caused to the West Rolling Hills fish cleaning station last fall and making plans for new additions. Some of these new items include picnic tables and grills at the Outlet Park beach and adding water and electricity to our most popular picnic shelter in East Rolling Hills.

If you are suffering from a case of raging Cabin Fever, there is one request I have of you. Please remember that the water temperature at Milford Lake is a balmy 34 degrees. If you want to know what that's like....fill your bathtub with ice water and immerse yourself for a few seconds. That's all it will take for you to get the full experience of a dunk in the lake for this time of year! And please remember.....your safety around cold water is our concern. That's the Milford Lake Update.